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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 30, 2008

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"The Quilt Lady" Closes in on Goal of 1000 Quilts for Foster Children

Jefferson City – Continuing the volunteer work she did for nine years in Oklahoma, an 85-year-old Jefferson City woman has made 987 quilts for foster children. Louise Parvin's goal is 1000 quilts.

"I started making quilts when I was 10, and made a few through the years," Parvin said. "When I was living in Oklahoma, I saw an article in the local newspaper in 1992 about the needs of foster children. That's when I made the first quilt for a foster child. My goal is 1000 quilts, which I should reach with the next batch. I make about 50 quilts each year."

"Ms. Parvin is very warm. I look at the detail she puts into the quilts, how she washes the material and irons the material. We call her the 'quilt lady'. She puts great effort into this," Missouri Department of Social Services' Children's Division (CD) employee Ann Carlock said. "She's wonderful. I have never met anyone like Ms. Parvin. Some of our foster children come into emergency care. A quilt is like security for those children."

The Children's Division encourages Missourians to assist local foster parents by donating bedding and school supplies for children in foster care. CD also encourages Missourians to assist local foster children by donating nice clothes, shoes, coats, toys, games, books and by buying uniforms or equipment for children involved in activities like sports and cheerleading.

"This is so heartwarming," Department of Social Services Director Deborah E. Scott said. "We are so grateful to Ms. Parvin for her generosity and her concern for foster children. These quilts are beautiful and mean so much to children in foster care. Ms. Parvin exemplifies the help we receive from the community, which is absolutely essential in caring for abused and neglected children."

Parvin quilts at her home and uses the sewing machine she purchased in 1992. Parvin's quilts feature many colors, but several are red. Parvin said little children like the color red. Parvin, who moved to Missouri in 2001, is the mother of Jefferson City Councilwoman Anita Randolph.

"My mom grew up during the Great Depression, and is generous with her quilt-making," Randolph said. "She took an activity she enjoys and turned it into a benefit for children who are in need."

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